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# The Decorator and Furnisher

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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, if in good condition:

No. 1, Volume 1; No. 6, Volume 15; No. 3, Volume 16;

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THERE was a rare and valuable collection of furniture of the First Empire on exhibition at the American Art Galleries, in this city, interesting not only from its rare historic interest, but from an artistic standpoint as well, as the many pieces shown were of the finest examples of the designs of that period.

For the past few years the style of the Empire has flourished in imitation and reproduction, but rarely in the genuine article handed down from the time of the Emperor, in whose days they were fashioned and first admired.

The chairs of the pseudo-classical design of the First Empire period are covered with the original silk, which is of red with wreaths of yellow. Among the many objects of interest is a Sedan chair of the Louis XV. period, belonging formerly to the Marquis de Maignan Le Maistie; a small Empire throne; a *chaise longue* and many rare cabinets, tables and desks of that period, that would well repay careful inspection.

IN continuance of the subject of simple screens for home decoration, we offer a few more suggestions to home workers in this useful line of household adornment.

There are draught screens, lamp screens, closet screens, table screens, window screens, hanging screens, and screens for an endless variety of uses; but what we would especially speak of now is the simplest screen of home construction. This may be made from a clothes-horse, plain and strong in construction, and is well adapted for this purpose.

TWO horses of five feet high are fastened together with double hinges, so as to swing free, thus making four panels. Use cotton cloth for covering, the width of each fold to come within one-fourth of an inch of each edge; tack securely at the bottom, carrying the material over the top of the screen and down the other side, drawing tightly, and securing, fast

at the bottom and along the sides with small upholsterers' tacks. The cloth is then covered with a thin coat of glue size, which causes it to shrink, thus binding the frame firmly together, allowing a solid surface to work upon. All the exposed portions of the wood on the edges and the feet (which should be cut a little concave on the inside) may be covered with a good coat of black shellac and rubbed down with an emery cloth to a soft, even surface. Next in order is the decoration, which may consist of paper. This may be either a pretty ornamental paper to match the room in which it is to stand, with a frieze at the top, or a plain field of Cartridge paper on both sides, on which may be painted in water colors a simple, broad flower treatment.

**TO** PUT the paper on first make a strong flour paste. Lay the paper face down on a flat, clean board, and cover all parts with a good coat of this paste, avoiding all lumps, and giving the surface of your screen that is to be immediately covered a thin, even coat of the paste, laid on with a broad, flat brush. Take the paper up carefully at the top, put top corners exactly in place, and draw the hands downward, smoothing the paper well into place as you progress. The paper, of course, must be cut the exact size required. Paper hangers use a small ivory roller to smooth the edges down into place, as they are apt to curl a little when wet; but, instead of this, a paper knife may be used, rubbing firmly and carefully with the flat side. At the top, where the material is left exposed, should be tacked from the edge of the paper on the front, over the top to the edge on the back, a piece of upholstery goods of harmonious color, fastened firmly in place to the edges and on the top with brass-headed upholsterers' nails. This screen being entirely "home-made" is very inexpensive, comprising as it does only the cost of the materials used, and may be made as attractive and artistic as it will be found useful.

**A** VERY handy little fire-screen may be made with a small clothes-horse, such as is used for drying small articles. This can be covered in the same manner, or, if it is to stand before an open fireplace, the back should be covered with a sheet of tin or zinc firmly nailed on. The decorations of these screens may be as varied as the different tastes may dictate. For bedroom uses, a pretty Watteau or French striped design in cretonne may be advantageously used.

**A** BEAUTIFUL novelty for a window screen is made of silk bolting cloth. This is intended to hang close to the window, and upon its transparent surface may be painted a broad effect in water colors, embodying a border of conventional design, using alternately salmon pink, blue, India red, tawny or foxy brown and gray, outlining in long stitches of silk in appropriate colors. Inside of this border may be worked a design in water lilies, with foliage, painted and worked in silks, the water suggested by broad touches of gray-blue, with an occasional gleam of silver thread. These are but suggestions of what may be done with this species of screens, as there are many elegant materials and combinations of color, but all depend for their beauty on the artistic make up and the rare qualities of their embroidery.

**E**VERY open fireplace should have its screen, as it forms a very effective addition to the furnishing of the room, and a very useful one, as well. Stained glass is well adapted to this purpose, care being taken that the glass is of such color and quality as to "break"

the fire light—opalescent glass being especially suitable, as well as "jewels," "crystals," and deeply corrugated rolled glass. In a home-made screen, should a transparent effect be required and stained glass not obtainable, a white bolting cloth, which is in itself semi-transparent, may be used. This may be stretched over the frame, and be decorated in water colors, and embroidered to suit the taste of the designer.

**S**CREENS for libraries and dining-rooms may be finished with leather panels. These panels can be had in great variety, either in plain or embossed patterns, and when trimmed with leather fringe and studded with either brass, leather, or nickel-plated nails, are very appropriate for these rooms.

**A**LTHOUGH we do not advocate draping the mantel-piece as a rule, it sometimes becomes a necessity, especially in the summer, when the fireplace is not used. This drapery may be made of any light and dainty material, and should take the place of the old-fashioned lambrequin, as it is more easily moved and better adapted to the purpose of summer use, as it hides the fireplace very nicely. It should be hung by rings from a bar of brass or wood, attached to the under side of the mantel shelf. Finish, if desired, with cords and tassels to harmonize, and should be deep enough to reach within five or six inches of the hearth, if not to the hearth itself. Hang same as a portière, in full folds, and decorate with embroidery, if desired. Of course, the decoration can be as diverse as agreeable, and a beautiful and novel effect can be brought about by draping back simply in the centre, showing the fire opening itself, filled with a mass of ferns and flowers in bloom, if desired.

**T**HE frames of these standing screens may be as different in material, style and shape as the decorations themselves. Bamboo frames are light, very cheap and make excellent summer decorations. Japanese lacquered work and Chinese frames are very popular, while ebony, white and gold, mahogany or other woods to match the furniture are also in order. For a screen standing solid enough on its base, the addition of narrow shelves to the upper or lower panels, or both, affords an opportunity to use bric-à-brac as an ornamentation; and in such cases as sitting-rooms or cosy nooks, these little shelves are a convenient resting-place for books or needlework.

**T**HE regular fixed panel may be changed to an open one, and covered with curtains suspended by rings. These little curtains may be made of light Japanese silk, and decorated with appliqué work, paint or embroidery, as desired. When high screens are used to shut off part of a room these curtained panels are sometimes very convenient, serving as a window through which other parts of the room may be seen.

**V**ERY much may be written of the beauties, uses and various means for decorating these home adornments, both in its simpler and more ornamental branches, than the limited space at our command will allow; and, indeed, the subject is so broad and embraces such an endless variety of styles and motifs, that a quarto volume would not suffice for the purpose. But we hope enough has been said here to interest all art-loving home workers to follow out these and their own ideas with successful and charming results.